

# PECULIARITIES OF CHILD'S UPBRINGING ON THE MONTESSORI METHOD IN KAZAN (RUSSIA)

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## **Abstract**

Maria Montessori was the first woman who developed this method. Initially, she worked with mentally retarded children. She made a large number of exercises, sensor materials, causing the children's interest in learning. Later, her textbooks and toys began to spread around the world. The main idea of this teaching method is the personal development of the child. This system improves the child's abilities, increases self-sufficiency, as well as his comprehensive development in accordance with the physiological capabilities. Such approach in education, naturally has a positive effect on the health and education of the child. The value and significance of the Montessori Method has been described in details in the works of foreign scientists. Famous Russian researchers were also interested in this system.

The relevance of this study lies in the fact that the methods of education of children are widespread in Tatarstan's educational system. Every year a lot of institutions, childcare centers are appearing, which work on the Montessori method. Here we can say about preschool educational institutions. The number of parents who want to give their children to such kindergarten is increasing every year. The basic principle of education is to play with toys. These researchers examined the application of some of the precepts of Maria Montessori in the family and nursery school.

The experimentation was held with preschool children aged 3-6 years in a kindergarten. The application of precepts and principles of education of this technique in a separate modern family were also reviewed. The authors of the research work carried out diagnosis and detailed analysis of the results. That's why there was an opportunity to observe how this system helped to train little children. This technique is quite interesting and at the same time unique. Children raised in a Montessori environment are very confident, can solve everyday problems. Many of the exercises are aimed to develop good motor skills. However, the emotional sphere remains untouched. Therefore, it is desirable for modern teachers to add their own methods for the full development of the child. In modern society, this method is very important. The main advantage of education is to reveal the personal qualities and talents of the child. Children become obedient, disciplined.

Keywords: Montessori method, school, teacher, child, education, development.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

The Italian educator, scientist and philosopher Maria Montessori created Montessori pedagogy, also known as the Montessori system of education in the first half of the XX century. The first Montessori school was opened in 1907 in Rome. Methods based on the experience of this school, were subsequently developed and, despite the criticism in the following years, they remain popular in many countries all over the world. The Montessori method is based on the individual approach of the teacher to each child: the child always chooses the educational material and the duration of employment, developing at his own pace and direction. Montessori pedagogy is often characterized as a pedagogical method in which the child and his individuality are at the forefront. Maria Montessori believed in the individuality of each child. Children learn freely, without coercion, outside interference and criticism. Maria Montessori was convinced that disapproval and punishment are harmful for internal orientation of a person and that people should learn everything by following their own motivation [1]. Children learn best when they can define their own rhythm and method of study. Independence is consolidated by the tasks of practical life (that is, those which find an immediate application in daily practice). Montessori kindergarten teaches (primarily through imitation) such things as to dress themselves, to wash, to set the table, etc. For Maria Montessori, it was of great importance to give the children the opportunity to develop their sensor perception in the prepared situation, observing their psychological needs [2]. Particular attention is paid to the general skills in the

discipline. The teacher shows the children how to put the chairs correctly and quietly so that they do not rattle or distract others, explains how to put materials on the shelves, how to use these or other objects. This training does not require a lot of words and explanations. The main thing is to demonstrate the actions as expressively as possible. Imitation and reproduction of the educator's movements are considered more effective method of teaching than words and explanations.

The day in the Montessori kindergarten begins with free work. Every child chooses what he will do today. This choice is determined by the didactic material, as a rule, which a child knows. The educator watches patiently how the children themselves choose the material for the classes. If the child is not familiar with the choice and the choice is difficult, the teacher gently directs him: "Why do not you do it today?", "Do you like this material?" However, the child himself makes the choice - the last word always remains for him. When the educator notices that the child took a new material for the first time, he offers the child the character of the action with this object, silently demonstrating the way of working with the material. The educator acts so expressively and emotionally, and the material is so attractive that any child flares up with the desire to work with it immediately. The general working atmosphere of the beginning of the day and the attraction of didactic material usually capture children. They work individually, each at their own table, with their own material and at their own pace. No one urges or hurries the child. At the same time, the freedom of movement of children is not limited, every child can approach the educator or his comrades.

It is necessary to note that the theme which is examined in this work became very relevant today. Nowadays, the pedagogy of Maria Montessori is experiencing a peak of popularity all over the world. Thousands of teachers, recognizing the pedagogical system of Montessori as unique and extremely effective, use her pedagogical principles. There are thousands of kindergartens around the world, based on Montessori pedagogy. In Russia such scientists, teachers as Dichkovsky I. N., Ponimonsky T. I., Afanasyeva T., Boguslavsky M. V., Sorokov, D. G. dedicated their researches to Montessori pedagogy. It is well known that the first messengers of Russia to foreign Montessori courses were E. Hiltunen and M. Sorokov. Later in 1992 on the initiative of Sorokova D. G., Fortieth M. G. and Somnitelno S. I., Montessori center was established in Moscow, which conducted the work in different directions. The teachers of the course were both Russian and foreign experts. Lectures and seminars were conducted by candidates and doctors of Sciences Boguslavsky M. V., Kornetov G. B., Sorokov D. G.[3].

Unfortunately, in our country sometimes this process is based on pure enthusiasm. Usually, it all starts with the fact that in traditional kindergarten enthusiasts persuade the Director of kindergarten to create one experimental group based on the Montessori Method. They find a teacher for this aim, the group is created, and soon the progress in the development of children is so obvious that other parents begin to envy [4]. As a result the next group appears, then the third, fourth and so on. The basic principle of the Montessori method is that children have a produced sequence of acquisition of the information, which they learn to get themselves.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

**Target:** to reveal the observance of the precepts of Montessori method in a separate family, and in a state nursery school.

Scientific research has been carried out by various methods: pedagogical supervision, pedagogical experimentation, sociological method, the theoretical analysis of the problem, study and generalization of the experience of other educators, the research interview.

The work explores the use of Montessori Method in conditions of state kindergarten and inside the family. All the participants were aware of the investigation, that the authors conducted. The research included the children from the simple state kindergarten aged between 3-6 (there were 3 groups, the first group consisted of 3-4 years old children, the second and the third groups included 5-6 years old children ) and 3, 4, 5 years old 8 children from 5 families. There were 18 children in each group in the kindergarten. The authors observed the enforcement of 10 precepts of Maria Montessori. The results show how these recommendations were maintained in reality nowadays.

Freedom is the life condition of all upbringing. You can not squeeze the child, compel or force him. Only in the presence of complete freedom and independence educators and parents can form the individual character of the child, thus his innate curiosity and cognitive activity appear. According to the great children's educator Maria Montessori, all children can be trained, giving them the "right" of freedom of choice. They are simple, but each one of them is a multivolume wisdom in a few words.

Many scientists, teachers advise parents at least once a year to read this list, to use it and then the relationship with your children can reach a qualitatively new level, and the child will grow more developed and harmonious personality. They are following:

- 1 Never touch the children, while they do not ask for help.
- 2 Don't speak badly about the children in their presence or without them.
- 3 Concentrate on the good sides of the child, then there will be less place for the bad habits in his life.
- 4 Carefully prepare the learning environment for the child. Explain the place of any material in the house and how to treat with it.
- 5 Respond to the addressing of the child who asks you for help, always listen to him.
- 6 Respect the child who makes mistakes and at this time or somehow later may correct them. However, stop the child if he uses material incorrectly, that threatens his own safety and the health of others.
- 7 Respect the child, who is having a rest, looking at the others in class. Don't call him and don't force to do something.
- 8 Help the child who wants to work, but does not know what to choose.
- 9 Encourage your child to do something new, master it, making it reservedly, quietly, solicitously and affectionately.
- 10 Communicating with your child, display only the best manners and ask him to do the same [1].

### 3 RESULTS

#### 3.1 Mari Montessori`s precepts

We applied these 10 precepts of Maria Montessori on the children from kindergarten aged between 3-6 and 3, 4, 5 years old 8 children from 5 families.

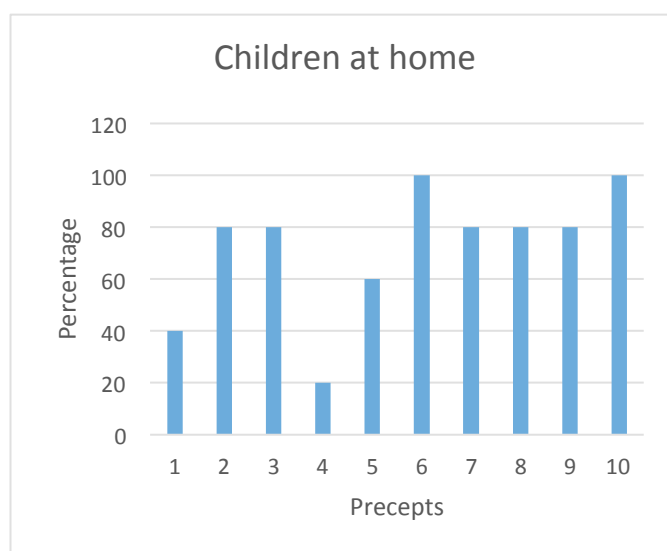


Figure 1. 10 precepts of Maria Montessori for children at home.

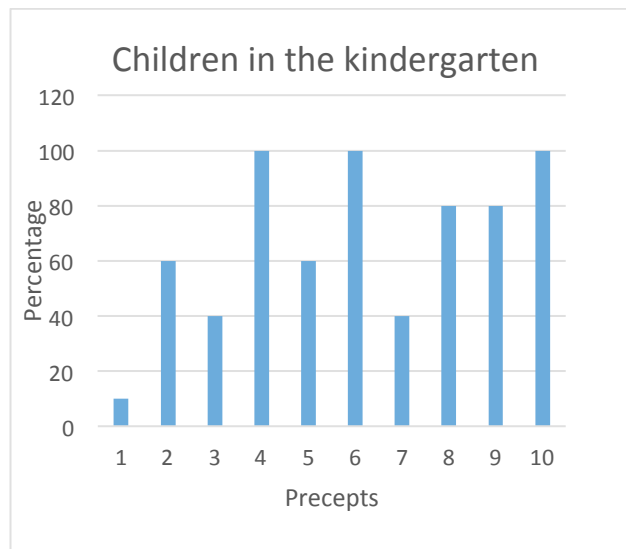


Figure 2. Maria Montessori's 10 precepts for children in the kindergarten.

- 1 Leave the child alone, if he asks for it. It really develops independence. In the family, this approach is often applicable. But during the experiment we found that in society, it is almost impossible because of the amount of children. However, in the family the child has more opportunities than in the nursery school. He has a confidence in his own abilities. As the chart shows realization of the first precept is 40% in the conditions of family.
- 2 Never speak badly in the presence of a child. The results showed that the praise and encouragement are more effective in the development of the child. He begins to feel more confident. Censure and harsh words have a negative impact. The results showed that parents, educators did not scold, did not discuss them. Moreover, they were right in this case. Nevertheless, the results show that percentage of execution of this precept is lower, just 60%. It is also connected with the amount of children in the kindergarten, because educators sometimes have to order, say some words in higher tones in order to attract the attention of the children [5].
- 3 Concentration on the good sides of the children. This aspect was applied successfully in the group and at home. Nevertheless, it is suitable to apply this inside one family, because it is complicated to praise children in the group all the time. Our experiment confirmed it. The percentage of execution of this precept constituted approximately 80 %.
- 4 Preparation of the Montessori environment. The results showed that in the presence of a separate language, space, mathematical, sensor, practical zone it is comfortable for teachers to teach with a variety of materials. The kindergarten has all the necessary areas of work. However, it is difficult to prepare all the zones with different benefits and toys at home. Therefore, in kindergarten toys are advantageous, because the zoning allows you to preserve the order and use all sorts of educational toys. The implementation of this point in the kindergarten was 100%.
- 5 There is always lack of time, when children are trained in a simple average family. Adults sometimes have no time to listen to their children. Not every family has a chance to keep babysitters, mothers and fathers have to work in order to feed their lovely children. And all the work on upbringing of a child is done by grandmothers. However, adults often hear a child, when he needs a help. In the kindergarten, they also ask for a help from their educators. We can say that in these situations, children get a help in equal quantity, because everybody tries to provide assistance, when a child needs something. According to the results of the experiment we can come to conclusion that sometimes children demand too much attention. Parents and educators have not so much time for all children referring to the lack of time, occupation. The implementation of this precept made 60 %.
- 6 When the child made different mistakes, adults corrected his mistakes at home. They tried to do it in a very polite way, without hurting him. As regarding to the kindergarten, educators also corrected children's mistakes. Therefore, we can say, that these cases do not vary each other too much. No one refers with children harshly. In dangerous situations, adults also warn

children about it, and they are true. Accordingly, they prevented bad situations. Here we can also say about little mistakes, which everyone can commit in his turn. Teachers and educators understood that children like adults made mistakes, in this way they learned to live, that's why they accepted this situation and the implementation of the precept was 100%.

- 7 In the family children had more freedom. However, the situation was quite different in the kindergarten. Because, children had to obey rules, schedule, which restricted their freedom. The results showed that only at home, children had chances to have a rest, relax, while they were always busy in the kindergarten learning something. The implementation of the seventh point was 80%. It is common known that children at home feel themselves naturally. It is quite different in the kindergarten, where they must obey rules, have to behave according to rules. Because the schedule is strict there.
- 8 These two items are also equal in both situations. Parents and educators often endorse children, they never disgrace them. Shame is a natural emotion, but it can be devastating. If children are shamed regularly, they began to feel them guilty, this feature is fixed. He considers himself to be poor forever, without any rehabilitation. Just faith in himself as a successful person and always beloved individual disappears in the future. Experiment showed this item was observed by both sides. To support a child means to believe in him. Verbally and non-verbally adult tells the child that believes in his powers and abilities [6]. The child needs support not only when he is bad, but when he feels well. Psychological support is based on how to help your children to feel their usefulness. The difference between the support and the reward is determined by the time and effect. The award is usually given to the child because he did something good, or for some achievements in a certain period of time. Support unlike of praise may be any attempt or little progress. When the adult is satisfied with what the child is doing, she supports the child and it stimulates to new attempts of activities. And the child likes to be active and independent.
- 9 In dealing with the child adults always followed the best manners — offered him the best that is in them. Parents and educators tried to be example for the children. Children in their turn imitated them. Of course, some things they took from their environment, but they already had the ability to choose and to divide into "bad" and "good" in accordance with what was taught by their parents. The child got the necessary knowledge in the family, his outlook on life, principles and beliefs were formed there. All that forms the basis of a child's life, was laid by parents in the family. The task of parents, if they themselves could not cope with the role of the teacher for their children, was to help the child to find a worthy teacher who would help in the life of their child. The implementation of this precept composed 100% in both cases [7].

### **3.2 The principles of Mari Montessori's Method**

The first principle was about the prepared environment. In the kindergarten and family children must have freedom. Little children play with toys and in this way they get knowledge. As our experiment showed, every child developed individually in the special environment. Our educators just helped the children to organize their activity. Moreover, parents created Montessori environment in their homes. They changed everything in the environment: furniture, toys, equipment. Child had an opportunity to demonstrate his individual talents in such environment. According to Montessori a child improves his intellect, mind, imagination. All of these facts proved that when children were presented choices, they showed their talents and capabilities. The essence of Montessori pedagogy is to encourage the child to study and to develop without educators. According to this principle, the child has a huge inner need to learn and to recognize the world around him [7]. In a special environment, the developing toys were specially chosen according to age, and the space was organized so that all game aids were always available to the child, he could get them calmly and deal with them as much as he considered indispensable. Experiment showed that children were most interested in those actions and subjects that were related to the real life of adults. They played with such subjects with great pleasure. Therefore, most of Montessori's equipments were based on the most common objects: here they learned how to pour water, string beads, cut paper, wipe dust, play with a bowl, all kinds of jars, boxes, etc. In the system much attention was given to the development of fine motor skills, so many games took place with the participation of beads, buttons, tweezers, clothespins, etc. Of course, there were no expensive materials at home. But parents themselves tried to find, to create Montessori toys in order to supply their children with suitable toys.

The second principle was self-knowledge. In other words it is called as "self education", when children are capable of educating themselves. Toys and educational materials were organized so, that the

child almost felt the whole world: tactile, sensory or abstract. For the development of fine motor skills and dexterity such items for the game were provided, where they could pour, sort by weight, size, shape. It did not matter if the first time child spilt [8]. It was not one of the abuses, because the children in this case were so upset. Area of sensorial perception gave opportunity to develop the senses: touch, sight, taste, and gave the first mathematical knowledge of the symbols, account, mathematical actions. The language zone was used for learning letters, new words. The child could use the moving alphabet or finger to draw the letter on the scattered semolina. During the experimentation, they were engaged in an equipped environment and they had freedom to choose. Educators and parents observed, encouraged them, tried to guide the children without being obstacle between the child and his experience. Montessori educators did not talk much, demonstrated learning materials and supported children. The children worked with toys, cards at first shown by teacher, and then began doing so individually.

And the third principle was respect. A person can not be free if he is not dependent. Therefore, the first active manifestations of the individual freedom of the child must be directed so that his independence is developed in this activity. Our parents at home and educators in the kindergarten were polite, children also became submissive and well – behaved. They were aware of the fact that children imitated them in any case. Because instinct of imitation of children was very strong, they admire adults. That's why during our experiment, we observed, that all adults were very kind, affectionate [9]. Every child was special, parents did not compare him with others. Each had his own abilities and achievements. Even though if he was not good at math, he liked to draw. He did not know how to write, to paint, but it was cheerful to observe when he talked to people and he had many friends. Continuous comparison of the child with others, leads to a decrease in his self-esteem. He begins to think that everybody hates him, and he can not do anything. But we did not observe such situation in our case. Parents helped the child to realize his original value, to see and develop his potential, believe in himself.

So after our experimental work, we could come to the conclusion, that the situations at home and in the kindergarten with Montessori pedagogy did not differ greatly. The results of our investigation showed that parents and educators try to follow Montessori's principles and precepts in Kazan. It means that children have a chance to get good education. There were little differences in some questions, which showed that children behaved in another way. Of course, recently many kindergartens appeared in Kazan. Parents try to give their children to such educational institutions. Many private kindergartens were established where children are brought on Montessori Method. Groups with such education also were opened in state kindergartens [10].

This technique is quite interesting and at the same time unique. Children raised in a Montessori environment are very confident, can solve everyday problems. Many of the exercises are aimed to develop fine motor skills. However, the emotional sphere remains untouched. Therefore, it is desirable for modern teachers to add their own methods for the full development of the child. In modern society, this method is very important. The main advantage of education is to reveal the personal qualities and talents of the child. In addition to this, children become obedient, disciplined.

## **4 CONCLUSION**

Thus, the main values of upbringing in the Montessori system are the individuality of the child, his interest, which manifests itself in concentration and concentration, and obedience. Since all these qualities are inherent in the child's nature, the pedagogical strategy of education is to give him complete freedom and independence, not to impose and not to direct, but to enable him to choose the objects and actions necessary for him. However, such freedom is possible only in a specially organized environment, corresponding to the needs and capabilities of the child. Despite the importance of using Montessori material and the way in which knowledge is presented, the most important asset of this methodology is the humanistic view of the child, the recognition of his personality and the right to be himself. The Montessori method does not dictate the conditions, but it gives guidance on how to act to an adult in a given situation. And this can be used with success by parents in the family, or rather, everything should begin with this. It makes life easier for parents and the fact that today there is more and more information about the methodology of Maria Montessori, books are published, websites and blogs are created, moms and educators shoot videos and write articles where they share experience, there are courses for parents. This indicates that the method exists, it is used in the education of the child [11].

Montessori educators of Russia are convinced that this direction of pedagogy in our country has a great future. At Montessori child centers, the child is accustomed to living in an atmosphere of constant creative work and finding independent solutions for his problems. And this means that the child grows free and independent. All parents want their child to become an independent, creative, free person. The role of the teacher here is very different from the usual for us: the teacher does not lead the child, but he follows it. The motto of Montessori pedagogy was the words of the child addressed to the teacher: "Help me do it myself". The child is studying what he is interested in. No one forces him. The concept of "free education" in the practice of Montessori means the freedom to choose what he wants for his development. However, it should be noted that there are many ways to influence the child. Everything depends on the particular person and his pedagogical abilities.

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